Southern Receiver System

Environmental Impact Assessment Status Report

Conawapa to Winnipeg Power Transmission Complex

March 1992

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Manitoba Hydro's Development Plan

Manitoba Hydro is currently pursuing a number of long-term capital investment and conservation initiatives. These are intended to meet projected consumer needs into the next century and to improve the security and reliability of the province's electrical system.

Part of Hydro's capital plan is to build the 1390 megawatt Conawapa Generating Station on the Nelson River, downstream of the soon-to-be-completed Limestone project. This facility will generate needed power for both projected demand within Manitoba and committed sales to Ontario and the United States.

Also proposed is development of the Conawapa-Winnipeg Power Transmission Complex, known technically as the Bipole III Complex.

The Conawapa-Winnipeg Power Transmission Complex

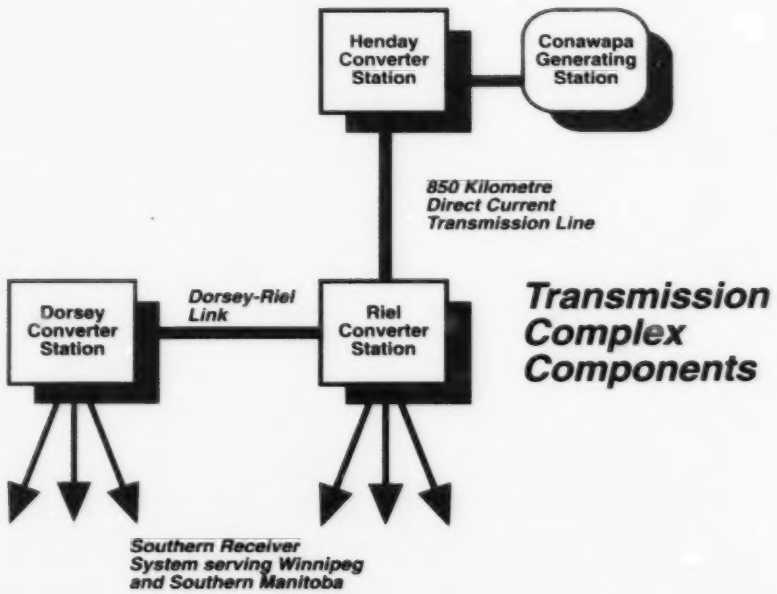
This major development includes five interrelated transmission and conversion facilities:

- An upgrade of the existing Henday Converter Station on the Nelson River;
- An estimated 850-kilometre HVDC (High Voltage Direct Current) transmission line from Henday to Winnipeg, known as Bipole III;
- A new converter station east of Winnipeg, known as Riel Converter Station;
- A transmission link between Riel and the existing Dorsey Converter Station northwest of Winnipeg; and
- Upgrades to Hydro's high voltage (230 kilovolt kV) Southern Receiver System serving Winnipeg and southern Manitoba.

Purposes

This Transmission Complex has three purposes:

- To convey Conawapa or other northern power to Hydro's receiving system in southern Manitoba;
- To increase the flexibility of Hydro's transmission network during normal operations; and
- To improve Hydro's capacity to service its customers in the event that part of its network is disrupted by an outage or by maintenance requirements.


Henday Converter Station
Conawapa Generating Station
850 Kilometre Direct Current Transmission Line
Dorsey Converter Station
Dorsey-Riel Link
Riel Converter Station
Southern Receiver System serving Winnipeg and Southern Manitoba

Transmission Complex Components

The Southern Receiver System Upgrade Study

This booklet describes work done to date on one component of the Conawapa-Winnipeg Power Transmission Complex — the Upgrade of the Southern Receiver System.

The Southern Receiver System is composed of a network of high voltage transmission lines and station facilities. It is continuously being improved to meet growing residential, commercial and industrial power demand in Winnipeg and Southern Manitoba.

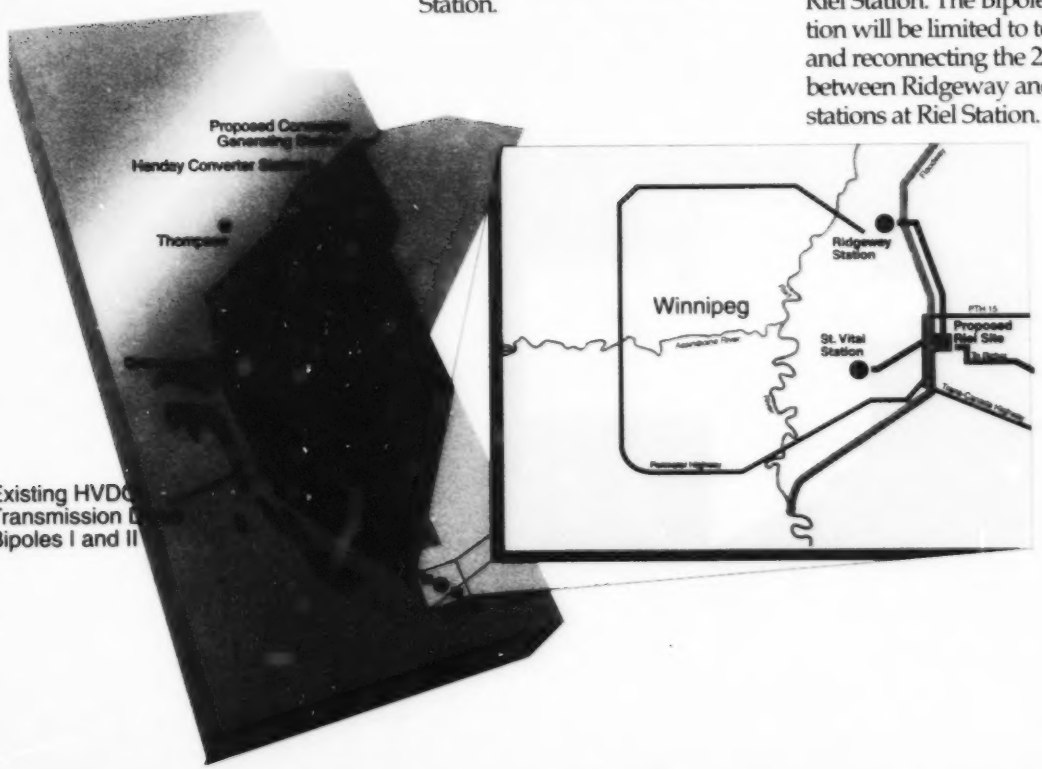
By the time that the Bipole III Transmission Complex is developed and ready to be linked to the Southern Receiver System, the system will have been developed beyond its current status. Pre-Bipole III development will particularly affect system facilities at and between the existing Ridgeway and St. Vital transformer stations (i.e. the section adjacent to the proposed Riel Converter Station), and will be required primarily to upgrade capacity at St. Vital Station.

Referred to in this report as the "St. Vital Station Upgrade", this development is planned to be in service in 1998 and will consist of three principal elements:

- Energizing a second 230 kV AC circuit on an existing tower line running from the proposed Riel Station site to the existing St. Vital Station.
- Constructing a new double-circuit, 230 kV AC tower line on the same existing right-of-way between St. Vital and the Riel site area; and
- Installing an additional transformer at St. Vital Station.

The 230 kV switchyard at St. Vital will be expanded to accommodate the new circuits and the additional transformer. Additional control and protection equipment will be installed within existing buildings at stations affected by the upgrade.

A subsequent upgrade (referred to in this report as the "Bipole III Connection") will be required to connect the Bipole III Transmission Complex to the Southern Receiver System. This upgrade will be needed in 1999 to enable commissioning of the HVDC facilities at the Riel Station. The Bipole III Connection will be limited to terminating and reconnecting the 230 kV circuits between Ridgeway and St. Vital stations at Riel Station.



Existing HVDC Transmission Bipoles I and II

Conclusions

Over the past year, Manitoba Hydro has been assessing the potential environmental impacts associated with the Southern Receiver System Upgrade.

Apart from St. Vital Station, the modifications required to present station facilities are very modest, incremental in scope, and confined to existing buildings. These control and protection equipment modifications do not involve significant environmental concerns and are not dealt with further in this status report.

The St. Vital Station Upgrade construction, proposed within the St. Vital-Riel right-of-way, and at the station, is greater in scope and potential impact. It should be noted, however, that both the St. Vital Station Upgrade and the Bipole III Connection will be undertaken at existing facilities and on existing sites and rights-of-way.

Within this context, the environmental impacts of both projects are generally not significant and will add little to earlier or existing impacts. Most of the expected impacts, positive and negative, will be short-term and largely related to construction activities. Any adverse effects of this kind are mitigable with the use of existing and proven technology. Those effects that could be of a longer-term nature are expected to be incremental to Manitoba Hydro's current operations and modest in scope and significance.

This booklet describes how and why the above judgments were made.

Public Review and Consultation

This status report provides an information base for public and community consultation on the proposed Southern Receiver System Upgrade. More detailed information will be available from Hydro's Environmental Management Division as the study proceeds.

Beginning later in 1992, Hydro's representatives will hold a series of community open houses and other meetings to discuss environmental issues related to the St. Vital Station Upgrade. Manitoba Hydro welcomes public discussion and comment on its analysis and conclusions. Area residents, property owners, farmers, environmental groups, government officials, and other interested parties are invited to participate.

Feedback received during these meetings will assist Hydro in its preparation of the final Environmental Impact Statement on the project, to be submitted to provincial and federal environmental review authorities in late 1992.

The Southern Receiver System Upgrade

Delivery of power from the proposed Conawapa Generating Station to southern Manitoba will require a new ±500 kV HVDC transmission line (Bipole III). Bipole III will terminate at Riel Station, proposed to be located at the "Deacon" site on Provincial Road 207 immediately east of the Winnipeg Floodway and north of the City of Winnipeg's Deacon Water Supply Reservoir.

At Riel Station, direct current (DC) power would be converted to alternating current (AC). AC power would then be transmitted via high voltage transmission lines to other stations for subsequent distribution to consumers in southern Manitoba and elsewhere. This transmission network is known as the Southern Receiver System.

Prior to connecting the Southern Receiver System to Riel in 1999, Hydro plans to add two 230 kV transmission line circuits to the system between the proposed Riel site and St. Vital Station. Hydro also intends to expand facilities at St. Vital Station.

Role within Hydro's Transmission Network

As demand for power increases in the south, and new generating and transmission facilities are developed in northern Manitoba, corresponding adjustments and improvements must be made in Hydro's southern transformation and transmission systems. These are needed to receive and deliver the additional power, and to enhance the overall reliability and flexibility of the system. Accordingly, Hydro plans to upgrade its Southern Receiver System both prior to and coincident with the development of the Riel Converter Station.

The upgrades are intended to ensure that customers in southern Manitoba will receive the increasing amount of electricity needed in future years and that the requisite flow of power will be maintained to export markets in the U.S. and Ontario.

As part of the St. Vital Station Upgrade, another transmission line, similar to the existing line, will be constructed along the same right-of-way.

At present, as schematically illustrated in Diagram 1, a double-circuit 230 kV AC tower line runs south from Ridgeway Station, northeast of Winnipeg, along the east side of the Winnipeg Floodway to just north of the Deacon Reservoir. At this point – the site of the proposed Riel Station – the two circuits separate. One circuit (Ridgeway-St. Vital) continues on a separate double-circuit tower line west to St. Vital Station. Both circuits on this line section have been strung but one is not energized. The second circuit (Ridgeway-Richer) continues on a separate single-circuit tower line south and east to Richer Station, northeast of Steinbach. From there, the line continues to Minnesota.

Prior to development of Bipole III, Hydro proposes to modify and expand the portion of the system at St. Vital Station and between St. Vital and the proposed Riel site. The transmission line elements of this St. Vital Station Upgrade are schematically illustrated in the accompanying Diagram 2. These are:

- A second Ridgeway-St. Vital circuit will be created by cutting the Richer circuit, connecting it to the presently unenergized circuit between St. Vital and the proposed Riel site, and terminating it at St. Vital.
- A new double-circuit tower line will be constructed between the Riel site and St. Vital Station. One circuit will be installed and energized by terminating it at St. Vital and linking it to the disconnected Richer circuit. The second circuit will be strung but will not be energized immediately.

The planned transmission line developments will significantly increase the 230 kV power supply capability to the St. Vital Station.

To increase the station capacity to deliver power to service expected load growth in the urban Winnipeg area, Hydro intends to install an additional 230/115 kV transformer in the switchyard.

In 1999, concurrent with development of Bipole III, the Southern Receiver System will be further upgraded by linking it directly to the new Riel Station. As schematically illustrated in the accompanying Diagram 3, the Bipole III Connection will involve the following modifications:

- The then two existing Ridgeway-St. Vital 230 kV circuits will be cut at Riel and re-terminated in the Riel 230 kV switchyard.
- The second circuit on the new (1999) St. Vital-Riel transmission line will be energized by terminating it in the 230 kV switchyards at St. Vital and Riel stations.

Diagram 1
Existing 230 kV Circuits at Riel Site

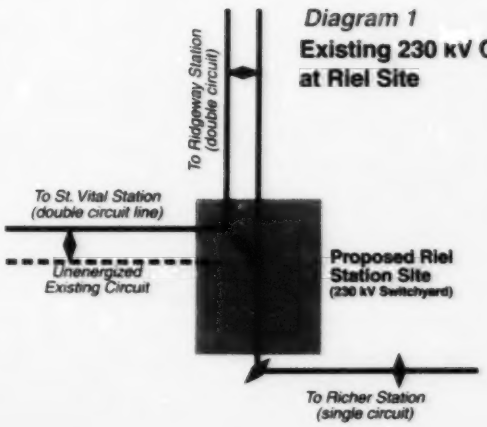
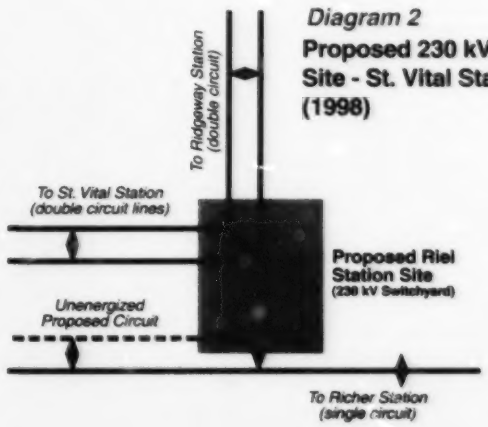

To Ridgeway Station (double circuit)
To St. Vital Station (double circuit line)
Unenergized Existing Circuit
Proposed Riel Station Site (230 kV Switchyard)
To Richer Station (single circuit)

Diagram 2
Proposed 230 kV Circuits at Riel Site - St. Vital Station Upgrade (1998)


To Ridgeway Station (double circuit)
To St. Vital Station (double circuit lines)
Unenergized Proposed Circuit
Proposed Riel Station Site (230 kV Switchyard)
To Richer Station (single circuit)

The net effect of these modifications will be to provide five 230 kV circuits from Riel Station. Together with AC operation of the proposed Dorsey-Riel Transmission Link, this would enable the capacity of the Bipole III Transmission Complex to be delivered from Riel to the Southern Receiving System, at the date of its coming in service in the Year 2000.

Subsequent Development

Over the longer term, additional circuits and tower lines are intended to be installed along the Ridgeway-Riel and the Riel-St. Vital rights-of-way. Further station modifications and transformer equipment additions will take place over time as required.

The proposed upgrades and future improvements to the Southern Receiver System will constitute an integral part of Hydro's ultimate development of a ring of high voltage transmission lines and station facilities around Winnipeg. The purpose of the ring is to ensure that all major transformer stations serving Winnipeg and adjacent areas, as well as system interconnections to other utilities, are linked to both a high capacity power source and a comparable back-up source by at least two separate high voltage circuits.

Project Requirements

Engineering for the various components of the Southern Receiver System Upgrade is scheduled to start in 1995. In general, the project will entail the following:

St. Vital Station Upgrade

All proposed 230 kV circuits between St. Vital and Riel stations will be installed on towers within the same existing 275-metre (900-foot) wide right-of-way. No acquisition of additional land will be required.

The additional circuits will be essentially of the same type as the existing circuits, i.e. three metallic conductors strung along double-circuit towers, probably of a self-supporting, lattice steel design. Towers typically will span a distance of about 400 metres, but spans may be adjusted in special circumstances, such as at highway crossings. Line construction work will involve establishment of tower foundations, tower assembly and erection, and conductor stringing.

Hydro proposes to site the additional transformer in the northeast quadrant of the existing 230 kV switchyard at St. Vital Station. The expanded switchyard site will be graded and gravelled. Additional fencing, grounding, lighting, and security systems will be installed. One 230/115 kV transformer, four 230 kV circuit breakers, and one 115 kV breaker will be added, along with new control and protection equipment. Switchyard work will primarily involve setting foundations and installing structures and equipment.

Additional control and protection equipment will be installed at St. Vital, Ridgeway, and Richer stations.

Bipole III Connection

Development associated with the 1999 Bipole III Connection will be limited to one additional circuit termination in the St. Vital 230 kV switchyard, five 230 kV circuit terminations in the proposed Riel 230 kV switchyard, and a Riel termination for 230 kV operation of the proposed Dorsey-Riel Transmission Link.

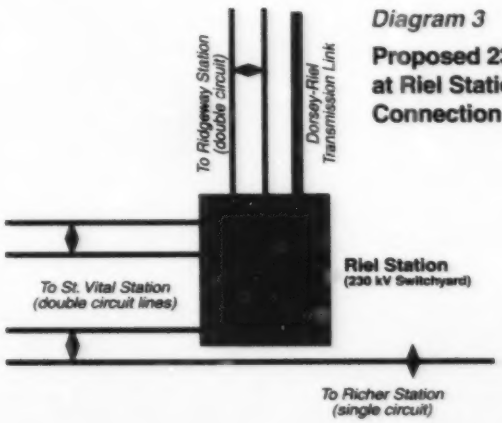

To Ridgeway Station (double circuit)
Dorsey-Riel Transmission Link
Riel Station
(230 kV Switchyard)
To St. Vital Station (double circuit lines)
To Richer Station (single circuit)

Diagram 3

Proposed 230 kV Circuits at Riel Station - Bipole III Connection (1999)

Project Setting

All of the work for the St. Vital Station Upgrade and Bipole III Connection will occur on existing Manitoba Hydro property. No new rights-of-way or station sites are required.

The projects will mostly involve Hydro facilities on the eastern edge of Winnipeg. Land use in this area is in transition from agriculture to suburban residential, commercial, and/or industrial development.

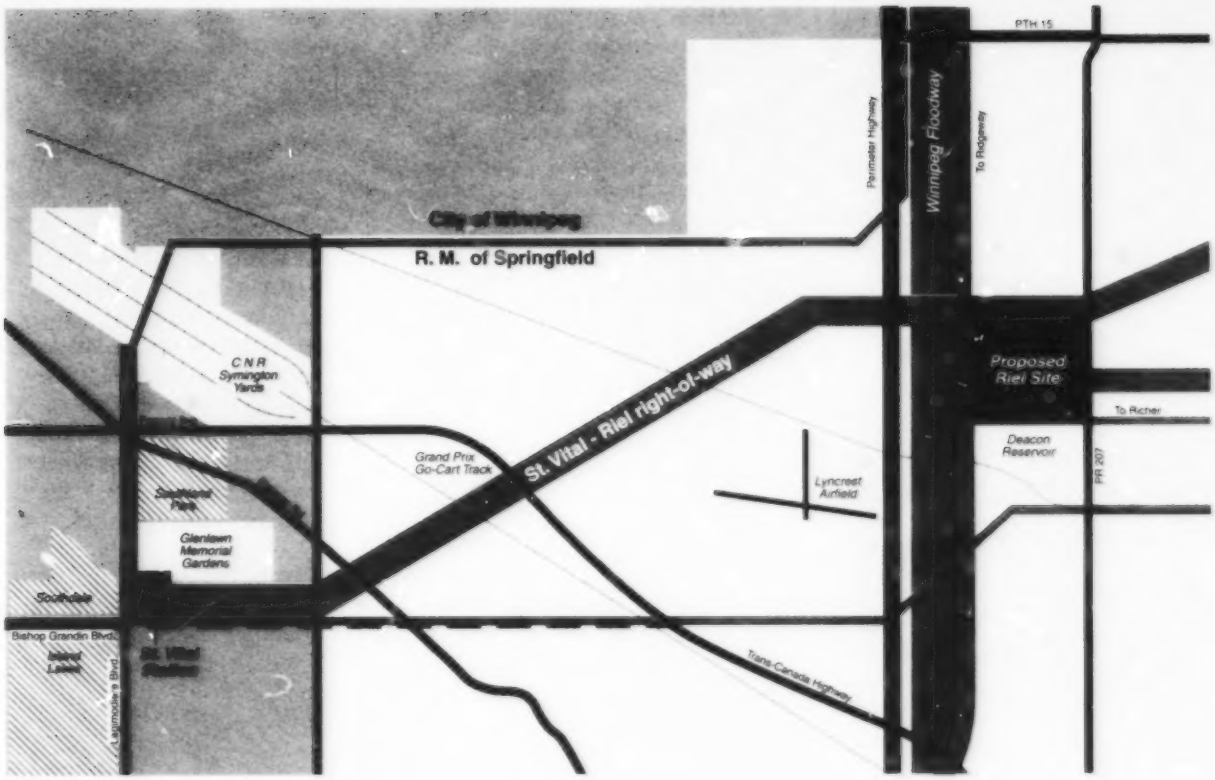
Study Area

A study area, defined by a radius of approximately 1.6 kilometres around St. Vital Station and 1.6 kilometres on each side of the St. Vital-Riel right-of-way, was established within which potential impacts have been identified and assessed. This study area assumes that the proposed Riel Station will be established at the preferred Deacon Site east of Winnipeg.

St. Vital Station and its associated right-of-way to Riel share common biophysical features, such as topography, climate, soil conditions, natural vegetation, and wildlife. The diversity of wildlife is low because of the limited availability of suitable habitat. Agricultural and urban use of the area has limited the presence of species that are particularly sensitive to factors such as air quality, noise, and the presence of humans.

No significant biological sites exist in the study area. The native prairie grassland and aspen parkland that originally occupied the study area have been highly modified by agricultural activity and urban development. While farming continues to be the dominant land use, both the station and right-of-way are near areas of existing, designated, or planned urban and suburban use.

These transmission towers, in the area of the proposed Riel Station, carry the existing Ridgeway-St. Vital and Ridgeway-Richer circuits. The Ridgeway-Richer circuit will be cut and re-connected as part of the St. Vital Station Upgrade.



Existing Land Use in the Area of the St. Vital Station Upgrade

Facility Locations

St. Vital Station is situated northeast of the junction of Lagimodiere and Bishop Grandin boulevards, within the City of Winnipeg. Originally constructed in the 1930s and rebuilt in 1961, the station's 230 kV switchyard and associated equipment were commissioned in 1975 when the station was linked to Ridgeway by a 230 kV AC transmission line. A number of other circuits run north and south of St. Vital Station on separate rights-of-way.

There is a developed residential area to the west of the station, separated from it by Lagimodiere Boulevard and an existing transmission line. A cemetery is located to the north. A housing subdivision has been developed north of the cemetery and is continuing to be developed to its north and east. While land further to the east and south is currently used for agricultural purposes or is vacant, its agricultural zoning within the city limits permits rural residential development on one acre parcels. Plan Winnipeg designates this area for future suburban residential use. Lands to the south are also separated by transmission lines as well as by proposed eastern extension of Bishop Grandin Boulevard.

The St. Vital-Riel right-of-way extends about 8.5 kilometres east from St. Vital Station through the City of Winnipeg and the Rural Municipality of Springfield to the proposed Riel Station site. Agricultural operations (including a dairy farm and several other commercial and hobby farms), landscaping and construction-related businesses, and rural residential subdivisions are nearby, the latter south of the right-of-way. Other land uses on or near the right-of-way include a go-cart track, situated on the right-of-way; a motel, within 0.2 kilometres; and Lyncrest Airfield, a privately-operated aerodrome, less than one kilometre to the south.

To the north of St. Vital Station, Glenlawn Memorial Gardens separates the station from the Southland Park residential subdivision. These transmission lines running north along Lagimodiere Boulevard will not be affected by the Upgrade.

The Grand Prix Go Cart Track is the only commercial development on the St. Vital-Riel right-of-way. The new tower line, to be constructed as part of the St. Vital Station Upgrade, will not affect the status of this facility.

Short-Term Effects and Impact Management

Manitoba Hydro has assessed the potential physical, biological, and socio-economic effects of the St. Vital Station Upgrade and the Bipole III Connection. Many of the projects' environmental impacts will be short-term and related to:

- *Transportation of workers, materials, and heavy equipment;*
- *Construction of the new St. Vital-Riel transmission line and switchyard expansion at St. Vital Station; and*
- *Construction employment and related business opportunities.*

The resultant impacts will be limited almost entirely to the St. Vital Station Upgrade.

Transportation

Switchyard expansion at St. Vital Station, erection of a new tower line on the St. Vital-Riel right-of-way, and 230 kV circuit installation will involve the transportation of workers, heavy equipment, and substantial volumes of construction materials.

Both the station equipment installation and tower construction along the right-of-way will entail heavy truck traffic for delivery of equipment and materials. As there is no direct rail access to the station site, special arrangements will be required for "oversize" truck delivery of the large and heavy transformer, probably from the nearby CN Symington Yards.

While the efficiency of these movements is expected to benefit from the convenient access now existing to the right-of-way and station site, transport activities will result in some short-term disturbances. These include: temporary disruptions in local traffic movements; additional noise, exhaust, and dust; and wear on affected roads. To minimize these impacts, Hydro and its contractors will schedule and control transport of oversize loads during clear weather conditions in either summer or winter, and at non-peak traffic periods.

St. Vital's new transformer will hold a large volume of mineral oil which will be delivered separately by truck. None of this oil will contain polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Appropriate precautions will be taken to minimize the risk and impact of accidental spills during transport of transformer oil or potentially hazardous substances.

In stringing the new transmission lines, workers will have to cross the Trans-Canada and Perimeter highways, two rail lines, and a number of minor roads. At such locations, the line stringing procedure will be designed to minimize disruption of traffic. Established Hydro practices to protect the safety of employees and the public, and to ensure protection of nearby uses and infrastructure, will be followed throughout construction.

Construction

Heavy construction equipment will be required at St. Vital Station and along the St. Vital-Riel right-of-way to grade the work sites; install tower and equipment foundations and piles; and haul, hoist, move, and/or assemble towers, conductors, and related equipment.

These operations will result in temporary impacts, including additional noise, exhaust, and dust; unavoidable disturbance of local wildlife; the potential for accidental spills of grease, fuels, or lubricants; and, along the right-of-way, the potential for crop damage and compaction of soils. Most construction will occur in proximity to low-intensity land uses and limited population.

Hydro will ensure that air and noise pollution controls, as may be required on equipment, will be operational and properly maintained. Where refuelling or servicing must be done on-site, best efforts will be made to reduce the risk or magnitude of spills or leaks. In the event of an accidental release, containment, clean-up, and disposal of potential contaminants will be done in compliance with applicable government regulations and established Hydro procedures. Any damage to land or property will be restored.

Where possible, tower line construction will be scheduled to minimize disturbance to agricultural and other users along the right-of-way. Vehicles will be restricted to travelling on designated public roadways and right-of-way access trails. Compensation will be provided in the event of adverse short-term agricultural or other impacts.

Established procedures will be employed to protect the environment from surface erosion, off-site migration of any spilled substances, and ground water contamination during excavation and drilling activity. The risk of ground or surface water contamination during construction is further reduced by the area's physical features, e.g., thick clay soils, depth to bedrock, flat topography, and the distance between St. Vital Station and the nearest flowing water course.

Employment and Business Opportunities

The Southern Receiver System Upgrades will result in an estimated 1,528 person-months of direct engineering and construction employment. It is anticipated that approximately 60 per cent of the construction work, or nearly 400 person-months of employment, will be contracted out. Hydro will follow its established tendering policies and procedures in hiring contractors.

Estimated project costs for the 1998 St. Vital Station Upgrade requirements are $31 million (1998 $). Costs of the subsequent 1999 Bipole III Connection will be included in the development of the Riel Station 230 kV switchyard. Employment and business benefits are expected to accrue mainly to residents of Winnipeg and surrounding areas. To ensure area businesses are aware of procurement opportunities, appropriate means will be used to provide information on Hydro's supply and service needs, purchasing procedures, and business policies.

Long-Term Effects and Impact Management

Based on Manitoba Hydro's assessment, long-term residual effects of the Southern Receiver System Upgrade will be modest and incremental in scope relative to current operations. The project will add little to existing impacts, while ensuring an adequate supply of electricity for future development in southeast Winnipeg and surrounding rural municipalities. St. Vital Station and the right-of-way are appropriate land uses within the existing planning and zoning designations.

As in the case of potential short-term effects, the potential long-term impacts will be limited almost entirely to the St. Vital Station Upgrade. Corresponding Bipole III Connection activities will be confined primarily to a small increment in activity at the proposed Riel Station site.

Land Use and Property Impacts

Locating the second St. Vital-Riel tower line on an existing, rather than a new right-of-way, minimizes the project's land requirements and impacts on local property. A total of less than one hectare of land under the new transmission line towers will be lost to agricultural use. As self-supporting, rather than guyed towers will be used, interference with agricultural operations and tillage patterns will be minimized.

Proposed changes at the St. Vital Station are compatible with the facility's current "M3" Heavy Industrial zoning. The layout and design of the switchyard, together with periodic monitoring, will ensure that ambient noise levels continue to be within acceptable limits.

Visual Effects

The visual impacts that will occur as a result of the addition of facilities and equipment at the St. Vital Station, and transmission towers and conductors within the St. Vital-Riel right-of-way, will be incremental to those already existing. Both the station site and the right-of-way are presently occupied by similar facilities.

The additional towers and lines will be visible from the Trans-Canada and Perimeter highways, several secondary roads, and nearby residences. Much of the area adjacent to the station and right-of-way is not intensively occupied at present. Any future residential or other development would be expected to recognize the existence of these facilities, as well as those within other developed Hydro corridors in the vicinity.

The St. Vital Station Upgrade will add minimal visual impact to the surrounding area.

Electric and Magnetic Fields

As with any electrical equipment, electric and magnetic fields (EMF) will occur at St. Vital Station and the associated transmission line right-of-way. To date, the weight of scientific evidence on this subject has not established any cause-effect link between EMF exposure and adverse effects on human health.

In recognition of the public's concern, Hydro will continue to measure and predict EMF levels at its own facilities, to conduct its own EMF research, and to monitor world-wide scientific studies on the subject.

Vegetation Control

Control of vegetation on the right-of-way will primarily be needed under the tower supports and rarely elsewhere since almost all of the affected land is cleared and under cultivation by neighbouring farmers. To meet grounding standards and ensure employee safety, the expanded switchyard at St. Vital Station will be surfaced with compacted granular material and kept free of weeds or other vegetation.

Should use of herbicides be required, their storage and application will be strictly controlled and will conform to federal and provincial government legislation. Only registered substances will be used and applied by employees who hold an applicator's license issued by the Department of Environment. Application procedures will minimize or eliminate drifting of spray beyond the target area.

Operation and Maintenance

At St. Vital Station, Hydro's established procedures for maintaining switchyard equipment will ensure that no oils, solvents, or other materials enter the City of Winnipeg's sewerage system, or are allowed to run off the surface of the site.

Routine operation and maintenance of the new transmission lines and station expansion involve monitoring and regular on-site inspections. As is the case with the existing facilities, methods used for repair and maintenance will vary according to specific right-of-way conditions and the sensitivity of adjacent land uses.

Most of the land along the St. Vital-Riel right-of-way is agricultural land. With the addition of the new tower line, less than one hectare of land will be lost to agricultural use.

Materials and Waste Management

Fuels, oils, lubricants, solvents, coolants, compressed gases, and other substances are now used and stored at St. Vital Station. The switchyard expansion will entail some increase in the volume of materials contained or used on-site.

The station is registered under applicable government legislation with respect to hazardous waste. Employees will continue to be trained in, and comply with, prevailing Hydro policies and procedures, and with government regulation, regarding the handling, storage, labelling, transportation, disposal, and emergency management of such materials. Appropriate municipal authorities are informed of all hazardous materials stored or used on-site.

St. Vital's new transformer will contain a substantial volume of specially refined mineral oil for cooling and insulating purposes. In accordance with applicable regulations, preventive measures will be established to contain transformer oil or other chemicals on-site in the event of a spill or fire.

Contingency Events

Installation of the additional transformers and associated electrical equipment at St. Vital will incrementally increase the risk of fire, and related air emissions.

Failures of 230 kV transformer equipment are rare and seldom result in fire. To minimize the risk of fire and its effects, Hydro uses state-of-the-art monitoring and detection technology, design measures, modern fire suppression equipment, and trained personnel.

On rare occasions, power lines may break or fall, generally as a result of inclement weather, e.g., ice and wind storms, tornadoes, etc. Hydro has trained staff in place and has established procedures to detect, isolate, secure, and repair damage to high voltage lines and towers.

Air Traffic

Light, private aircraft presently fly over the existing St. Vital-Riel tower line on their way to and from Lyncrest Airfield. The second tower line would be installed approximately 700 metres from the airfield's north end, roughly 30 metres closer than the existing transmission line. To ensure continued safety of local air traffic, Hydro will assess the new situation once design details are finalized and will mark the transmission line at and near the approaches, in accordance with applicable internal policies and government regulations.

Employment

As is presently the case, there will be no staff based at St. Vital Station.

The Next Steps

Manitoba Hydro has requested provincial and federal government authorization to develop the Conawapa-Winnipeg Power Transmission Complex.

Regulatory Process

Before approval can be granted, Hydro must submit siting or routing studies, as applicable, and environmental assessment/impact management reports for all project components, including the Southern Receiver System Upgrade. The Environmental Impact Statements for the St. Vital Station Upgrade and the Bipole III Connection are expected to be submitted to the governments in late 1992.

A joint federal/provincial Environmental Review Panel has been established to undertake the regulatory review and to conduct public hearings on the Conawapa-Winnipeg Power Transmission Complex. This Panel is responsible for making recommendations to the provincial and federal governments. Before any construction work can begin, the formal approvals of the Manitoba Minister of Environment and his federal counterpart are required.

Following public consultations on the Southern Receiver System Upgrade, Hydro will complete its environmental assessment and impact management report, and will request authorization to develop the project. Final documents will be submitted to the joint Panel for review and public hearings during the approval and licensing process.

Public Consultation and Comment

Throughout this regulatory process, members of the public will have a series of opportunities to make their voices heard. The open houses, planned to begin later in 1992, represent the next important opportunity for interested parties to provide Hydro with their views and suggestions before the final Southern Receiver System Upgrade Environmental Impact Statement is completed.

Once that document is submitted to the Manitoba-Canada Panel, it will be available to all persons in preparation for public hearings on the project. Anyone may appear before the Panel in support of, or in opposition to, Hydro's proposals.

Manitoba Hydro looks forward to discussing this project with you.

Meetings and open houses will be held to provide information and opportunities for public comment on the Southern Receiver System Upgrade.